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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 000291

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EI](#)
SUBJECT: IRISH VIEWS OF THE MAY 26-27 FOREIGN MINISTERS
MEETING (GAERC)

REF: A. STATE 54639
[B](#). DUBLIN 274
[C](#). DUBLIN 263

Classified By: Pol/Econ Section Chief Ted Pierce;
Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#). (U) POLOFF delivered Ref A demarche on May 22, 2008 to
Claire Buckley, Deputy European Correspondent, Department of
Foreign Affairs.

Cuba

[2](#). (C) Buckley acknowledged the U.S. position on Cuba,
saying that Ireland recognized the "crossroads" potential for
change there, and emphasized that the Irish fully support
democracy and human rights improvements in Cuba. However,
she noted that Ireland would work within the corridors of the
EU to craft its national policy on Cuba.

Western Balkans

[3](#). (C) Buckley said that U.S. and Irish views on the Balkans
were very similar and that Ireland was working within the EU
to advance EU policy on this basis.

Belarus

[4](#). (C) Saying that the thrust of Ireland's assistance to
Belarus was in support of civil society, democracy, and human
rights, Buckley indicated that Irish policy on Belarus,
especially vis-a-vis the Belarusian diplomatic challenge to
the U.S., would be guided by emerging EU policy.

Lebanon

[5](#). (C) Buckley noted that the GAERC would review
developments in Lebanon and would issue conclusions on how to
proceed that would be aimed at bolstering Arab League efforts.

Israeli-Palestinian Peace

[6](#). (C) Conclusions will be reached on the Middle East peace
process during the GAERC, Buckley said, noting that they are
likely to be critical of continued expansion of Israeli
settlements. Saying that "Abbas is the only game in town,"
and that events in Gaza are particularly difficult, she mused
that it was difficult to be optimistic.

Afghanistan

¶7. (C) Buckley said that conclusions will be reached on Afghanistan. She noted that Ireland had provided 16.5 million euro (\$25.5 million) to Afghanistan since 2005 (Ref B), and indicated that Ireland intended to continue providing humanitarian and institutional strengthening assistance. She noted, however, that the capacity of the Afghans to absorb the aid was becoming a problem, pointing out that not all the funds pledged by Ireland have been utilized.

Somalia

¶8. (C) Buckley stated that Ireland was concerned about Somali piracy and supported a draft UNSC resolution, having resolved initial legal questions about the language of the resolution (Ref C). However, she said, Ireland was aware that not every nation was in agreement with the resolution (some expressing concerns about Law of the Sea issues), and indicated that Ireland would stress international dialogue in reaching a resolution.

Georgia

¶9. (C) Saying that the Russians were unlikely to reduce tensions, Buckley indicated that the outcome of the GAERC discussion on Georgia would depend, in part, on assessments

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of the credibility of the recent Parliamentary election.
FOLEY